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# **Farm Broadcasters Letter**

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2544

Feb. 7, 1992

**GROWTH AGENDA TO HELP FARMERS** -- President **George Bush**'s growth agenda will benefit American farmers, says **Roger Runningen**, press secretary to Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan**. A number of the proposals will raise farmers' after-tax income. Strengthening the economy boosts the demand for farm products, Runningen says. Farm gross receipts the first year will likely rise by \$600 million, raising net farm income by half that amount, he says. And, he says, tax changes in Bush's proposals will leave more money in people's pockets. **Contact: Roger Runningen** (202) 720-4623.

**EGG PRODUCTION UP** -- December egg production was up 2 percent from a year earlier, USDA statisticians report. U.S. hens produced 6.01 billion eggs during December. This figure included 5.18 billion table eggs, 762 million broiler-type hatching eggs and 62 million egg-type hatching eggs. During December, producers had 279 million laying hens, also up 2 percent from a year ago. Production per 100 layers was down slightly from a year earlier; each 100 hens produced 2,153 eggs in 1991, compared with 2,156 in December of 1990. **Contact: Robert E. Little** (202) 720-6147.

**BUDGET BOOK AVAILABLE** -- USDA's "1993 Budget Summary" is available to members of the media. USDA's overall 1993 budget proposal calls for a program level of \$82.6 billion, a decrease of \$1.2 billion from the 1992 current estimate of \$83.8 billion. Some of the emphasis for the 1992 budget include: new uses for ag commodities, biofuels, nutrition education, food safety, America the Beautiful program, water quality national research initiative and global change. **Contact: Stephen Dewhurst** (202) 720-3323. For a copy of the "1993 Budget Summary," **Contact: Marci Hilt** (202) 720-6445. Sections of the summary are available on Ag NewsFAX. Use your FAX phone to call (202) 690-3944 and select category 2, Fact Sheets and then 1, to receive a list of what's available.

**EXPORT DIRECTORY AVAILABLE** -- USDA's National Agricultural Library now has copies of a reference directory containing the addresses and telephone numbers of key contacts in ag exporting and lists of selected exporting databases and publications. The publication, "Directory of Export and Trade Assistance," is intended to help U.S. businesses involved in exporting ag products. It is available free by sending a self-addressed mailing label to: Agricultural Trade and Marketing Information Center, National Ag Library, Room 304, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, Md. 20705-2351. **Contact: Brian Norris** (301) 504-6778.

**DONATION HOTLINE** -- The U.S. has established an Emergency Donation Hotline to help in donation or sales of commodities or services to the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. The number is (703) 276-1914. The hotline is staffed from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday; taped messages can be left at other hours. **Contact: Sally Klusaritz** (202) 720-3448.

**FIELD TESTING PLANTS** -- During November and December, USDA issued six permits to commercial companies to field-test crop plants that were genetically engineered. USDA has been issuing permits since 1987 for controlled field trials of certain genetically-engineered crops. The permits covered tobacco plants in North Carolina; potato plants in Wisconsin; tomato plants in Florida and California; corn in Illinois; and apple trees in California. **Contact: Amichai Heppner** (301) 436-5222.

**MEXICAN PORK** -- USDA is proposing to permit fresh, chilled or frozen pork and pork products from Sonora, Mexico, to move through the United States for export to other countries. Shipping certain swine and pork from Mexico through the United States has been banned because Mexico has hog cholera, but recently Mexican animal health officials have recognized the state of Sonora as free of hog cholera, says **Lonnie J. King**, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The pork in transit from Sonora must meet rigorous shipping and handling requirements. **Contact: Alan Zagier** (301) 436-7255.

**MOTH FAMILY PLANNING** -- Female corn earworms assure their offspring will return each growing season by delaying sex until the crops have produced the plant parts their offspring will need to thrive. The moths do this, according to USDA scientist **Ashok K. Raina**, by withholding their seductive pheromone, which males of the same species home in on to locate a ready and willing mate. Thus, mating is timed to the pest's preference for eating corn silks and kernels or tomatoes and cotton bolls, instead of the less-desirable plant leaves. **Contact: Autar K. Mattoo** (301) 504-5103.

**TAX DEDUCTIBLE ANIMALS?** Farmers may be able to depreciate some of the livestock on their farms. Livestock acquired for work, breeding or dairy purposes that aren't part of an inventory account may be depreciated. For more details on livestock depreciation, see the free IRS Publication 225, **Farmer's Tax Guide**. You can order it by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM. **Contact: Darlyn Robinson-Boyd** (202) 535-6576.

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## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA #1809** -- President **George Bush** recently released both his fiscal year 1993 budget proposal for USDA and his economic growth package. Both could have impacts on the farming community. **Brenda Curtis** has a report. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

**CONSUMER TIME #1291** -- A Groundhog Day post-game show; USDA's school lunch; the federal budget and consumer programs; high-tech foods; a safer chicken? (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

**AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1800** -- USDA News Highlights; USDA's proposed fiscal year 1993 budget proposal, farmers and the economic growth package; poultry export prospects; farm numbers still falling. (Weekly reel of news features.)

**NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1506** -- Studying sterols; kinder, gentler pesticides; understanding oysters; low-input legumes; breeding hairy alfalfa. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** -- Wed., Feb. 12, world ag/grain situation, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation; Thurs., Feb. 13, ag resources outlook (inputs); Fri., Feb. 14, milk production; Mon., Feb. 17, Holiday; Tues., Feb. 18, farm labor, wheat update; Wed., Feb. 19, crop/weather update, ag income/finance outlook; Thurs., Feb. 20, U.S. ag outlook. **(These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)**

**DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**

Material changed at 5 p.m., EST, each working day.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

**FEATURES** -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on the farm costs and returns survey; **Will Pemble** reports on irradiating grapefruit; **Mike Thomas** reports on gene mapping for corn and **Dave Luciani** reports on potato plants that battle their enemies.

**ACTUALITIES** -- USDA meteorologist **Norton Strommen** on latest weather and crop conditions and novelist **Dori Sanders** on Black History Month.

**UPCOMING FEATURES** -- **DeBoria Janifer** reports on new varieties of hollies; **Pat O'Leary** reports on lawn landscaping; **Lynn Wyvill** reports on teaching children about food safety and nutrition.

**EVERY OTHER WEEK** -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

*Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:*

**Thursdays** from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EST, **Saturdays** from 10 - 10:45 a.m., EST, and **Mondays** from 8 - 8:45 a.m., EST.



**EARLY WINTER**...presented farmers the biggest opportunity yet to practice conservation tillage, says **Robert Quinn** (WHO, Des Moines, Iowa). Early arrival of winter last October prevented many farmers from tilling their fields and state extension service and producer organizations are urging farmers to reduce tillage this spring. More producers plan to increase corn acreage in response to the low set-aside.

**NO TILL**...is attracting the attention of more farmers, says **Rita Frazer** (WSMI, Litchfield, Ill.). Farmers in Montgomery County recently formed a Soil Savers Committee and 100 producers attended the first meeting. Rita says the majority of farmers in her area practice minimum tillage. February is Farmers Appreciation Month at the station. Rita is producing special programs for the month-long promotion.

**SUGAR BEETS**...are spoiling on the ground, says **Lyle Romine** (American Ag Network, Fargo, N.D.), and crops have lost their snow cover. Lyle says that up north everybody likes a warm winter except farmers. Wheat producers with product to sell are grinning ear-to-ear. He says they like the positive markets and plan to increase acreage this spring.

### ***Farm Broadcasters Letter***



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**WHEAT PRODUCERS**...in the northern sections of Indiana are concerned about the condition of their crop, says **Jim Riggs** (WILO/WSHW, Frankfort, Ind.). Warm conditions late last year and recent cold snaps appear to have caused damage. Jim says a major expansion in local production of hogs has producers keeping a close eye on prices. They are telling him that small-sized operations and corporate producers will likely be the survivors of any long-term drop in prices.

**COTTON ACREAGE**...in North Carolina has doubled each year during the past three years, says **Johnnie Hood** (WPTF/Southern Farm Network, Raleigh, N.C.). Good prices and eradication of the boll weevil set the stage for increases. He expects cotton acreage in the state to top 600,000 this year. Johnnie says growing tobacco plant beds in greenhouses has been a revolution in tobacco production. This year 50 percent of the planted crop is expected to come from greenhouses. He says it helps producers to cut labor costs.

**VIC POWELL**

Chief, Radio & TV Division